

CHAPTER 2

In 1873 Enoch Mankayi Sontonga was born in Uitenhage in the Eastern Cape - born to the Mpinga clan of the Xhosa nation. Not much is known about him except that he trained as a teacher at Lovedale Training Institution. He later became a choir master, composer and photographer.

Enoch left the Cape colony (as it was known then), came to Johannesburg and taught at the Nancefield Methodist Mission School prior to the South African War (Anglo-Boer War). He married Diana Mngqibisa, the daughter of a prominent minister in the African Methodist Episcopal Church, and they had one son.

Enoch Sontonga was a preacher in Reverend Mzimba's church.

Nkosi Sikelel'iAfrika is composed

In 1897 Enoch Sontonga composed the hymn "Nkosi Sikelel'iAfrika". The words, in isiXhosa, were the following:

Nkosi sikelel'iAfrika	God bless Africa
Maluphakam'uphondo	Let its horn be raised
lwayo	
Yiva imithandazo yetu	Hear our prayers
Usisikelele.	and bless us.

Refrain: Yihla Moya, Yihla	Come down Spirit, Come
Moya,	down Spirit
Yihla Moya oyingcwele.	Come down Holy Spirit.

Nkosi Sikelel'i Africa

Enoch Sontonga

Doh is Bb

SOPRANO | d . t : d . r | m : m | r : r | d :- | m . m : r . m | f : f | m : m | r :-
 Nko-si, si-ke-le - l'i - A - fri - ka, Ma-lu-pa-ka-m'u-po - ndo lwa- yo;
 s . s : s . s | d : d | t : t | s :- | d . d : t . d | r : r | d : d | t : l |

ALTO | Nko-si, si-ke-le - l'i - A - fri - ka, Ma-lu-pa-ka-m'u-po - ndo lwa- yo; —
 m . r : m . f | s : s | f : f | m :- | s . s : s . s | s : s | s : s | s : f

TENOR | Nko-si, si-ke-le - l'i - A - fri - ka, Ma-lu-pa-ka-m'u-po - ndo lwa- yo; —
 d . d : d . d | d : d | s : s | d :- | d . d : d . d | t : t | d : l | s :-

BASS | Nko-si, si-ke-le - l'i - A - fri - ka, Ma-lu-pa-ka-m'u-po - ndo lwa- yo;

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d. t: d. r | m : m | r : f | m :- | r :- | d :- | t. d: r . t | d :- | r :- | d :-

Yi-va i-mi-ta-nda - zo ye - tu, U - si - si-ke-le - le, U - si -

s. s: s. s | d : d | t : r | d :- | l :- | s :- | s. s: s | s : t. d | l :- | s :-

Yi-va i-mi-ta-nda - zo ye - tu, U - si - si-ke-le - le, U - si -

m. r: m. f | s : s | s : l | s :- | f :- | m :- | r. m: f. r | m : s | f :- | m :-

Yi-va i-mi-ta-nda - zo ye - tu, U - si - si-ke-le - le, U - si -

m. m: m. s | d : d | s : s | d :- | f :- | s :- | s. s: s | d : r. m | f :- | s :-

Yi-va i-mi-ta-nda - zo ye - tu, U - si - si-ke-le - le, U - si -

The hymn was first sung in 1899 at the ordination of Reverend Bowen, a Shangaan Methodist minister.

Enoch Mankayi Sontonga died on the 18 April 1905 aged 32.

Popularization of the hymn

On the 8 January 1912, at the first meeting of the South African Native National Congress (SANNC) - the forerunner of the African National Congress (ANC) - in Bloemfontein, “Nkosi Sikelel’iAfrika” was immediately sung after the closing prayer. Reverend John Langalibalele Dube’s Ohlange Zulu Choir, conducted by R.T. Caluza - a choirmaster and composer - popularised the hymn at concerts in Johannesburg and in the Union of South Africa, and it became a popular church hymn that was also adopted as the anthem at political meetings. (Reverend

John Langalibalele Dube was the founder of the Ohlange Institution - a high school in the then Natal, and was the first president of the South African Native National Congress).

Solomon Plaatje, one of South Africa's greatest writers and a founding member of the ANC, was the first to have the hymn recorded in London on 16 October 1923, accompanied by Sylvia Colenso on piano.

From 1925 "Nkosi Sikelel'iAfrika" became the official anthem for the African National Congress - it became their closing anthem for their meetings.

Samuel Edward Krune Mqhayi - a Xhosa poet - added seven verses (in 1927) to the one verse that Enoch Sontonga had composed.

Sikelela iNkosi zetu;	Bless our chiefs
Zimkumbule umDali	May they remember
wazo;	their Creator;
Zimoyike zezimhlonele,	Fear Him and
	revere Him,
Azisikelele.	That He may bless
	them.
Sikelel'amadod'esizwe,	Bless the public men,
Sikelela kwa nomlisela	Bless also the youth
Ulitwal'ilizwe	That they may carry
ngomonde,	the land with patience,
Uwusikelele.	and that Thou mayst
	bless them.



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Sikelel'amakosikazi;	Bless the wives;
Nawo	And also all young
onk'amanenekazi;	women;
Pakamisa	Lift up all the young
wonk'umtinjana	girls
Uwusikelele.	And bless them.

Sikelela abafundisi	Bless the ministers
Bemvaba zonke zelizwe;	of all churches of this
	land;
Ubatwese ngoMoya	Endue them with Thy
Wako	Spirit
Ubasikelele.	And bless them.

Sikelel'ulimo nemfuyo;	Bless agriculture and stock raising;
Gxota zonk'indlala nezifo;	Banish all famine and diseases;
Zalisa ilizwe ngempilo	Fill the land with good health
Ulisikelele.	And bless it.
Sikelel'amalinge etu	Bless our efforts
Awomanyano nokuzaka,	of union and self-uplift,
Awemfundo nemvisiswano	of education and mutual understanding
Uwasikelele.	And bless them.

Nkosi sikelel'iAfrika;	Lord, bless Africa;
Cima bonk'ubugwenxa	Blot out all its
bayo	wickedness
Nezigqito, nezono zayo	And its transgressions
	and sins,
Uyisikelele.	And bless it.

The hymn - all verses - was first published in 1927 by Lovedale Press in pamphlet form. It was also published in a newspaper, *Umteteli wabantu* on 11 June 1927 and in a Xhosa poetry book for schools. It was included in *Incwadi Yamaculo ase Rabe* (Presbyterian Xhosa Hymn Book), issued by Lovedale Press in 1929.

When the ANC and other liberation movements were banned by the Nationalist Government, they found bases from which they could operate in sympathetic neighbouring countries in Africa. The ANC continued using “Nkosi

Sikelel'iAfrika", and it became a Pan-African liberation anthem and was later adopted as the national anthem of Zambia, Tanzania (Mungu ibariki Afrika – Swahili), Namibia and Zimbabwe (Ishe komborera Africa – Shona) after these countries became independent. Zimbabwe and Namibia have since adopted new national anthems. In other African countries throughout Southern Africa, the hymn was sung as part of the anti-colonial movement. It includes versions in Chichewa (Malawi and Zambia).

In Finland the same melody is used as the children's psalm *Kuule Isä Taivaan* (Hear, Heavenly Father). The first part of the hymn has appeared in the hymn book of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland since 1985 with lyrics by Jaakko Löytty. In Kenya, Mang'u High School uses a translation, *Mungu Ibariki Mang'u High*, as its school anthem.